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**Missouri Department of Conservation  
LAND DONATION BOOKLET**

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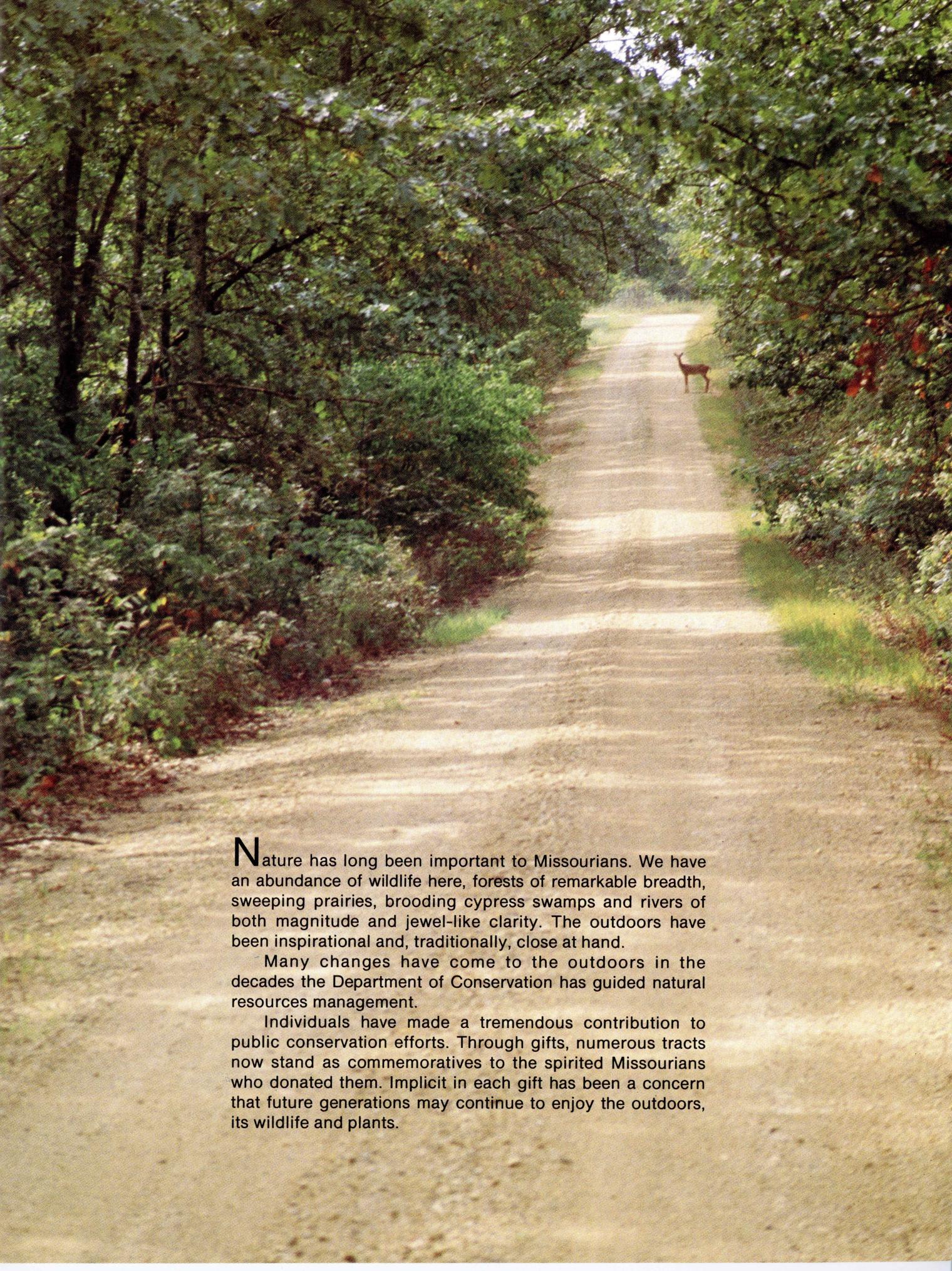
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**N**ature has long been important to Missourians. We have an abundance of wildlife here, forests of remarkable breadth, sweeping prairies, brooding cypress swamps and rivers of both magnitude and jewel-like clarity. The outdoors have been inspirational and, traditionally, close at hand.

Many changes have come to the outdoors in the decades the Department of Conservation has guided natural resources management.

Individuals have made a tremendous contribution to public conservation efforts. Through gifts, numerous tracts now stand as commemoratives to the spirited Missourians who donated them. Implicit in each gift has been a concern that future generations may continue to enjoy the outdoors, its wildlife and plants.

# **Commemoration**

Most donations to the Department of Conservation become *memorial lands*. These are wildlife areas, state forests or river access sites named for their donors, tracts which bear the name, forever, of the conservation-minded Missourian who made it possible to retain them, free from damaging development and valuable to wildlife. Future generations will visit uplands, woodlands or marshes that carry the name of today's donor, reminded that someone in the past made it possible for them to enjoy an unspoiled part of the outdoors.

Unique tracts administered by the Department of Conservation commemorate many individuals. They represent gifts of every imaginable size and type, from fragile natural areas to wildlife habitat, state forests, river accesses and outdoor education centers. The five-acre Ross Access on the Big Piney River in Pulaski County was a gift of Ross E. Stones of St. Louis. This was a comparatively small tract, but it had great impact. It was the first in what became a broad effort to give Missourians access to their rivers, and river access sites now number over 100.

At the other end of the spectrum in size are areas such as the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area near Kansas City. The area was begun with a donation of 831 acres by Mrs. James A. Reed. Mrs. Reed desired the land be a memorial to her husband, the late Senator Reed, and be developed for public use. The James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area has since grown to 2,160 acres.

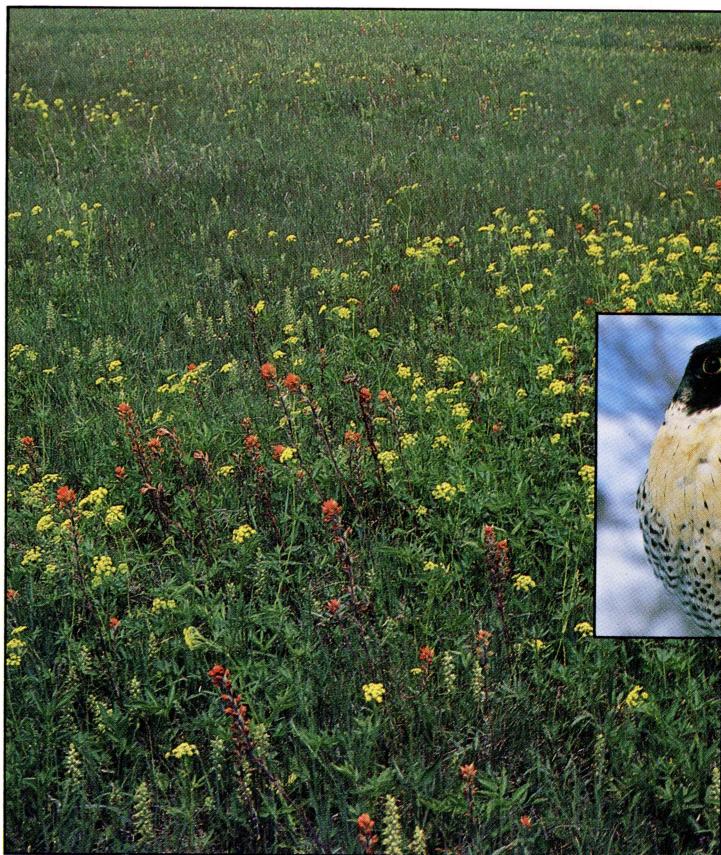
Some donations may consist of an outright partial gift with the remainder being incorporated into the donor's will. Another form of giving is the outright gift of property with the donor retaining a life estate for his or her exclusive use. In this instance, donors can retain use of the property during their lifetimes and still realize a tax advantage. In still other cases, gifts are in the form of both land and money. All avenues of donations have tax consequences, and an attorney or accountant should be consulted to determine what method best fits the individual's purpose.

The Department of Conservation has a legal staff that will work with private attorneys in accomplishing donations to the Department. However, legal and ethical considerations prevent our attorney from either preparing documents or rendering advice directly to individuals not represented by counsel.

## ***In This Book*** —

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## ***Cover Memorial Wildlife Area***

The wild things of nature have always given Dan and Maureen Cover much enjoyment.

Dan is a lifelong falconer and supporter of raptor conservation. The Covers have hatched 27 peregrine falcons from one breeding pair—at their own expense. Some of the young were sent to Cornell University in New York and released to the wild. Dan and Maureen hope to have the same success with prairie chickens they are raising, and have a goal to re-establish the birds on a prairie they own.

Commitment to conservation extends beyond falcons and prairie chickens for the Covers. They also believe in preserving land, and have donated 282 acres to the Department of Conservation.

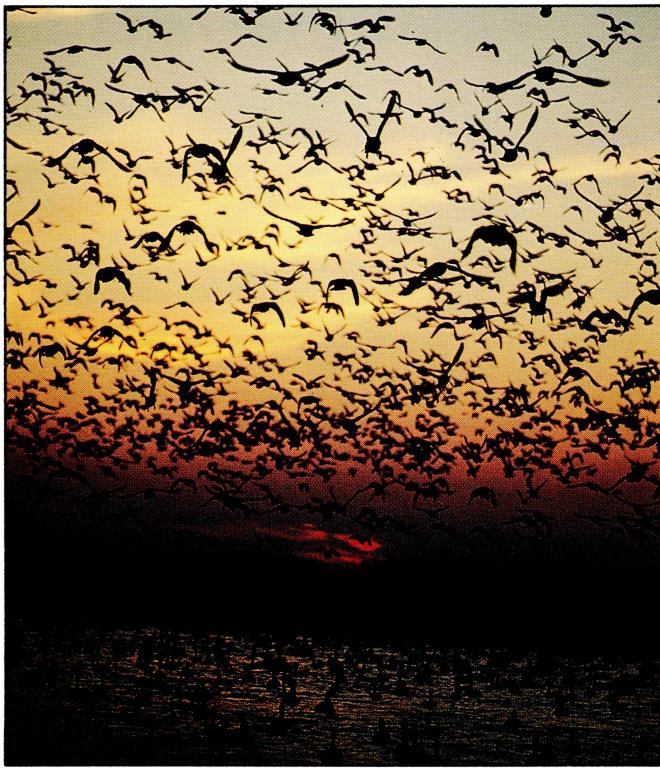
“Giving the land wasn’t a totally altruistic thing on our part. There were economic incentives,” Dan said. “We used tax breaks

to buy a larger piece of land.”

The 736 acres Dan and Maureen bought is closer to their home, making it possible for them to invest more time in the land. “We couldn’t spread ourselves too thin,” Dan said. “We thought we could accomplish a lot more on this land. We’re trying to restore it to prairie, but it still has a brush problem. The main thrust is improved management for bobwhite (quail).”

Restoring the land to prairie is a labor of love for the Covers, and they hope the Department will continue this work after they are gone. “I’d hate to see the fescue take over again,” Dan said.

Stone pillars stand sentinel over the prairie entrance where an inscribed stone plaque sums up the goals and commitment of Dan and Maureen: “Dedicated to the proposition that wildlife is important.”



## ***Perry Memorial Wildlife Area***

The most prominent decoration in the office of the late Kansas City physician Dr. Ralph Perry was a large aerial photo of the wildlife area which bears his and his wife's name. Dr. Perry had grown up as a sportsman, enjoying the outdoors through hunting and fishing. He had looked for some way to repay the outdoors for his pleasure—to protect a portion of the Missouri environment—and he found it through a remarkable donation.

In 1970 Dr. and Mrs. Perry began donating land and money to the Department of Conservation, beginning with a tract in Johnson County near Concordia. Dr. Perry became so devoted to the project that he put off retirement for five years, and at the time of his death in 1976 the wildlife area had grown to over 2,300 acres.

The Ralph and Martha Perry Memorial Wildlife Area includes a slice of the Black-

water River and a fine marsh which draws migrating waterfowl. The uplands are spotted with deer tracks and provide habitat for countless quail, rabbits and a wealth of songbirds. The area is close to several colleges and universities, and is growing in value as an outdoor education site.

The 77th Missouri General Assembly recognized the Perry's for their public spirited generosity in a 1975 House Resolution. "Dr. Perry was a quiet man," said one conservationist, "a sportsman who gave not only land and money, but time from his life for the people of Missouri."

Colleagues said his main concern was, "Not personal recognition, but to help as many people as possible," and they saw the wildlife area as a fitting remembrance for a dedicated physician and humanitarian.



## ***Little Dixie Wildlife Area***

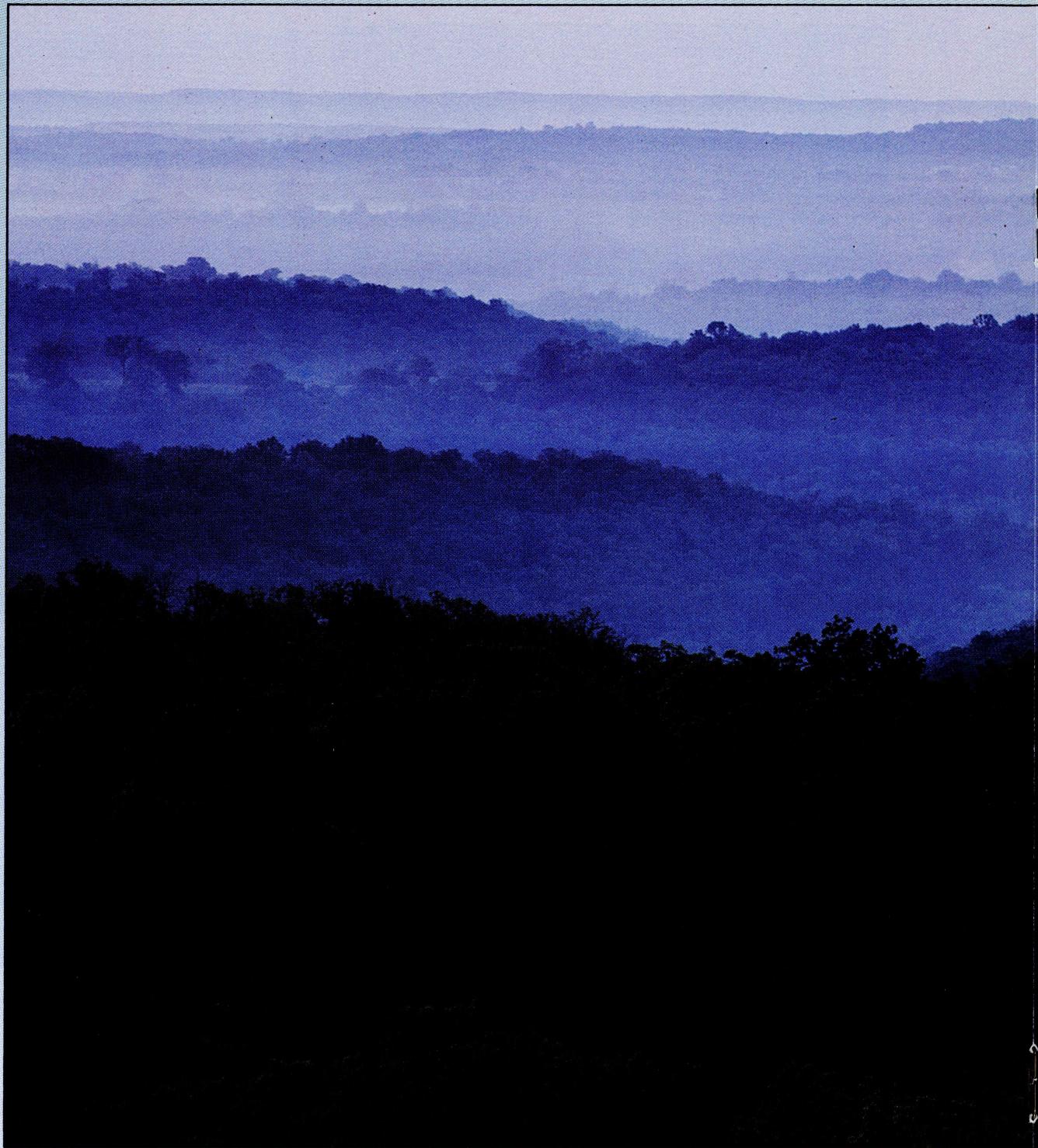
**T**he strength of many can be greater than one, and Little Dixie Wildlife Area is evidence of that strength. It became one of the first areas to be added under the Conservation Department's Community Lake Program.

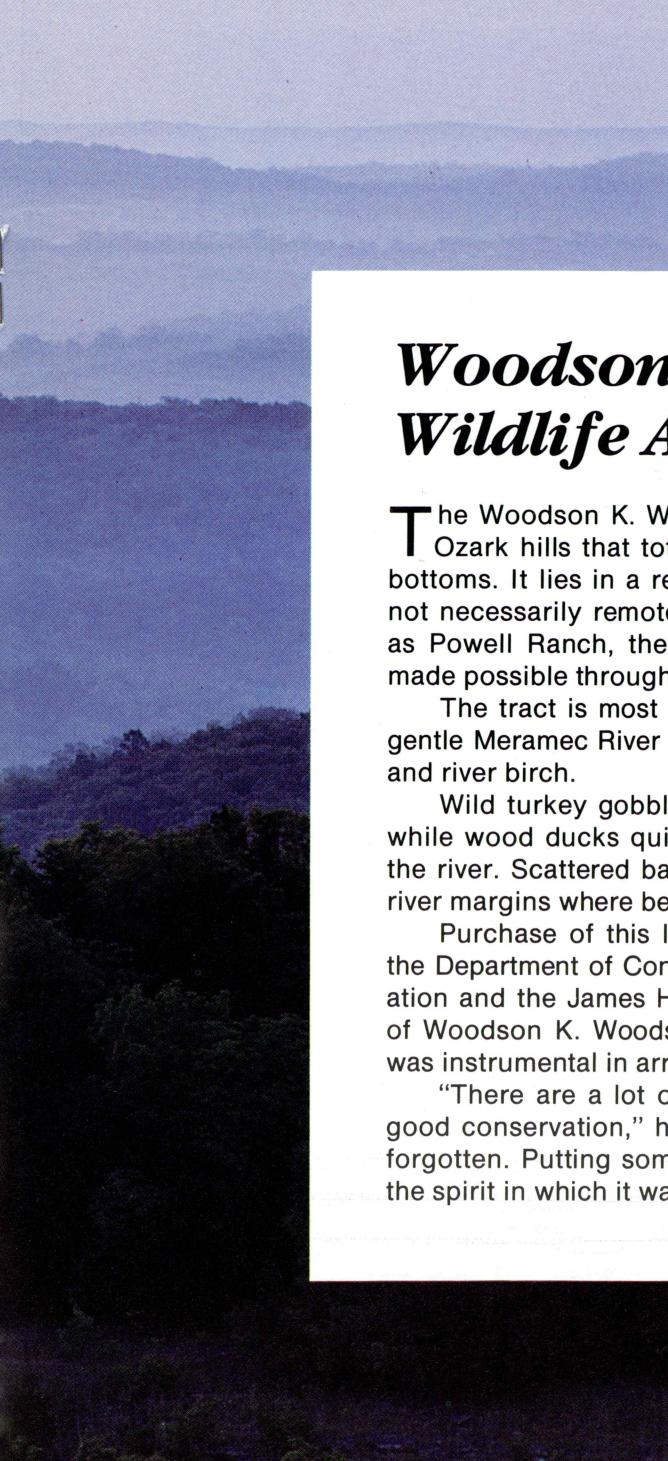
Local sports enthusiasts of Boone and Callaway counties banded together, called themselves the Lake Association, and raised money to buy the 448-acre area. In 1957, the land was donated to the Department, and a 205-acre lake built. The Lake Program has since grown and now includes

a total of 19 lakes.

On a warm, breezy night the jetties of Little Dixie are dotted with anglers patiently waiting for the "big one" to bite. Others less inclined to drop a line can stroll the ten miles of trails through the area.

Little Dixie is a success in many ways. It brought outdoor recreation close to home for people in Callaway and nearby counties. Even more importantly, it united neighbors with a common interest in setting aside land for all to enjoy.





## ***Woodson K. Woods Wildlife Area***

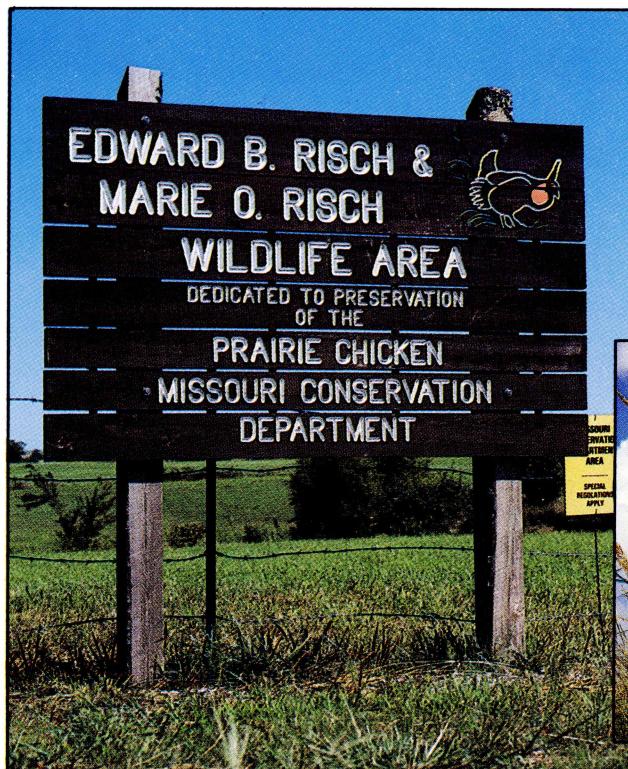
**T**he Woodson K. Woods Wildlife Area is a wild tract in the rolling Ozark hills that totals over 5,000 acres of forests, bluffs and river bottoms. It lies in a region long cherished for its natural beauty, yet not necessarily remote enough to escape development. Once known as Powell Ranch, the tract is now protected in a public ownership made possible through a unique donation.

The tract is most easily seen from the seat of a canoe, threading gentle Meramec River rapids and deep pools overhung with sycamore and river birch.

Wild turkey gobblers strut the oak-clad ridges here at daybreak, while wood ducks quietly rear their broods in shaded backwaters of the river. Scattered bands of wildflowers bloom in spring beyond the river margins where beavers cut saplings and tunnel in the banks.

Purchase of this large tract was accomplished with money from the Department of Conservation, the federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the James H. Woods Foundation. Jim Woods Jr., grandson of Woodson K. Woods and owner of neighboring Chaumiere Farms, was instrumental in arranging the Foundation's donation.

"There are a lot of people in Missouri who are able to do some good conservation," he said. "This land will be here long after we're forgotten. Putting someone's name on a sign is a nice memorial, but the spirit in which it was done is the real memorial."



## *Risch Wildlife Area*

A dream became a reality for Ed and Marie Risch when they visited the prairie land bought with money they had donated to the Conservation Department.

"I didn't know what to do when we saw the sign," Marie said. "I was so happy I cried. When you see your own name you realize it's something that will be there forever."

Ed, 70, had cancer surgery four years ago. The illness prompted Ed and Marie to think about the future and how they would like to be remembered.

They have been avid nature lovers through the years, so the 163-acre area in Barton County seemed like the perfect choice. The mix of prairie, woods and cropland is home to some of the birds and animals the Rischs enjoy watching, and is managed especially as habitat for

prairie chickens.

"Wildlife is suffering," Ed said. "Very few people care about the land. This may get people thinking that they can give, too." The Rischs have willed additional farmland, near their home in Bland, to the Department and requested it to be used as a wildlife area.

Their home, amid 43 acres of lush, peaceful land, is testimony to their dedication to the land. Oaks and redbuds stand among wildflowers that line nature trails they have created. The pond is a popular stop for egrets, blue herons and an occasional angler. The peaceful setting reminds Marie of her early years in a log house in Missouri.

"I love people," she said. "But I'm so much happier in nature."



## ***J. Thad Ray Memorial Wildlife Area***

The J. Thad Ray Memorial Wildlife Area is a 137-acre tract of white oak timber in the rugged Mississippi River breaks on the edge of Hannibal. Several unique plants and wildlife, from deer to raccoons, are abundant lures to botany and biology classes from nearby Hannibal LaGrange College. A year-round spring flows through the woods.

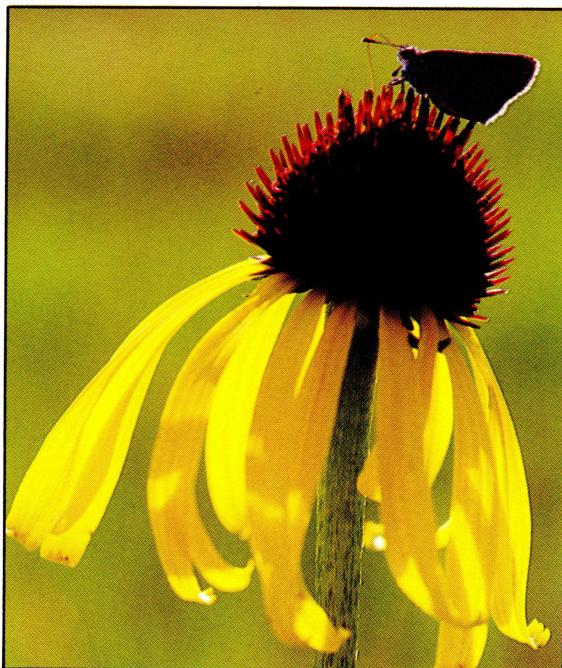
The late Mrs. Kate Ray Kuhn of Hannibal was respected and well known for her extensive knowledge of local history. She had written a book based on that knowledge, and possessed a strong interest in wildlife and natural resources.

In 1971 she donated 57 acres of land to the Department of Conservation, asking that the area be named in honor of her father. J. Thad Ray had been a farmer,

constable, sheriff, prosecuting attorney and judge in Marion County.

In donating the tract, Mrs. Kuhn preserved forever a portion of the Missouri history that had been the hallmark of her life. The land had been part of her father's farm, and in her will she stipulated the Department of Conservation ultimately receive the adjoining 80 acres. Similarly, she donated historical items, such as books, genealogies, photos and notes, to local historical groups.

The J. Thad Ray Memorial Wildlife Area is serving as an outdoor education facility. It is also a place for people to simply enjoy the outdoors, a valuable donation from a Missourian with a strong sense of history and a feeling for the value of natural resources.



## ***Kearn Memorial Wildlife Area***

**T**here's two main reasons why I did this," J.N. "Turkey" Kearn said. "You see, being unmarried, I really don't have any direct family of my own to give it to, but, mostly, I didn't want to see somebody else buy up this place and put a herd of tractors on it and just plow it all under. I told you before, I've got this thing

against a lot of modern stuff, especially equipment. Well I've also got a deep-set feeling about this land . . . I like to have wildlife around."

What "Turkey" Kearn did was donate his 1,436-acre farm in Johnson and Pettis counties to the people of Missouri. The land will be a memorial of the Kearn family, managed by the Department of Conservation as a wildlife area.

By donating his farm for conservation management, "Turkey" Kearn assured that it will continue to get the kind of stewardship he had given it, that the land will not be "mined," that it will continue to provide good habitat for wildlife.

Kearn, who spent his life farming the property, says he dedicated his bequest in the name of his father and the Irish-immigrant grandfather who started the farm with an original government deed. "For three generations," Kearn said, "my family used this land steadily and I think my folks would approve of giving it back to the critters again."

The farm includes a 25-acre patch of virgin prairie, a rarity in modern Missouri. The entire Kearn donation was valued at about \$1 million.

"I've made what I have on my own judgment," Kearn says. "I've laid awake nights thinking about what to do with my land—talked to hundreds of people. But when it came to the final decision, it had to be mine."



## ***Wilbur Allen Memorial Wildlife Area***



**W**ilbur Allen was a conservationist and wanted to see land put away for that purpose," said Elizabeth Allen. "He grew up in Kansas City, and he saw the once open space for rabbit hunting gradually become paved streets and tall buildings."

In memory of her late husband, Mrs. Allen acquired 380 acres of woods and grassland.

The shade of oak, ash and redbud trees offer solitude in the Wilbur Allen Memorial Wildlife Area, with the reassurance that the land will be there, wild and serene, for everyone.

When choosing a memorial for her late husband, Mrs. Allen discussed the wildlife area with their three sons. All enjoy the outdoors. "It's good to be able to spend time with nature," she said. "It gives a person quiet time to think and relax."

The gentle waters of the Gasconade River flow through the area inviting anglers and hikers to the comfort of its banks. Wilbur had an appreciation for such beauty, Elizabeth said, and believed in careful management of the land.

Bow hunting for deer is allowed on the Allen area, and firearms for hunting other game. Wilbur enjoyed hunting and applied his philosophy of conservation to the sport.



## ***White Memorial Wildlife Area***

**M**rs. John Creech and Mrs. John McCue are daughters of William and Erma White, and it is for their parents that the William G. White & Erma Parke White Memorial Wildlife Area is named. The tract consists of 800 acres of rolling fields and woodlands in Lincoln County, a farm that has been in the White family for over 65 years.

The two sisters grew up on the farm. "It's a pleasure to give this to the Conservation Department," Mrs. McCue said at a dedication ceremony.

"We believe in the Department and think they'll do with it what we want done," she added. "We want the land preserved as a unit and used for the pleasure of the larger community. This way, we hope other generations can enjoy it as we have when it was our home."

The dedication day was a memorable one for the donors. "We are looking forward to the conservation work planned for our old homestead," Mrs. Creech said.

Missourians fortunate enough to visit the tract will readily understand the sisters' love for their family farm. The over-half century of caretaking by one family will continue with the area's dedication and its management by professional conservationists.





## ***Management of Department Lands***

The Department of Conservation includes Fisheries, Forestry and Wildlife divisions and Natural History Section which are involved in land management. They are staffed by professional biologists and foresters. They are aided in their efforts by the personnel of several staff sections, from engineering and educational specialists to wildlife services and planning experts. The Department has a nationwide reputation for excellence in wildlife and forest management, recognition earned through performance.

Traditionally the Department of Conservation's management responsibilities have been for fish, game and forests, though recently that has been expanded to include management of unique natural areas. Natural areas are defined as biological communities, either terrestrial or aquatic, in a natural or nearly undisturbed state. They are to be permanently protected or managed for the purpose of preserving native plant and animal communities or rare members of such communities.

Donated tracts will be evaluated, and those with unique features will be considered for inclusion in the Natural Areas System. Most important, *all* of the Department's public tracts are managed for the greatest benefit to both land and wildlife.

The Department of Conservation was funded almost solely by the sale of hunting and fishing permits for 40 years. In 1976 Missourians voted to dedicate an addition to the sales tax for conservation use.

Consequently the Department's budget increased and more funds became available for the purchase of wildlife and timber lands. *Donated lands, however, are probably more important than ever.* That portion of Missouri which has not been irreversibly altered by development shrinks each day, and those tracts which can be protected through donations and management are of increasing value. The commemorative aspect of donations will of course continue to be a very special aspect for conservation-minded benefactors.

